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NEW BUTTERFLY RECORDS FOR THE UNITED STATES (HESPERIIDAE & LIBYTHEIDAE)¹

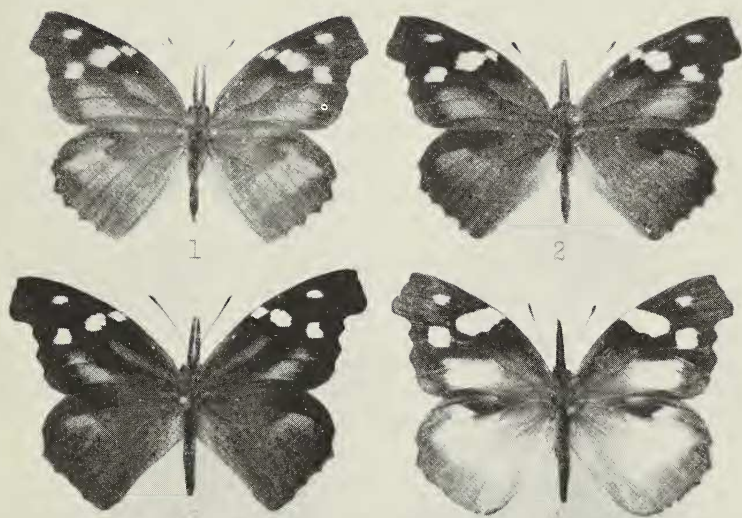
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COLLECTING IN SOUTHERN TEXAS during June 1968 produced an abundance of new and unusual species of Lepidoptera, due perhaps to an unusually wet season. One species of Pyrginae new to the United States was collected — *Polythrix mexicanus* Freeman, 1969, a species recently described from Valles, S.L.P., Mexico. This species bears a close resemblance to *Polythrix asine* (Hewitson), 1867. Specimens were collected 28 June in Bentsen Rio Grande Valley State Park in Hidalgo County, where its restricted habitat preferences made collecting difficult. The only specimens collected or observed were found in deeply shaded areas under tropical vegetation. These same areas were producing *Synapte malitiosa pecta* Evans, 1955, and *Monca telata tyrtaeus* (Plotz), 1883. A peculiar characteristic which immediately set *P. mexicanus* apart from other species was the habit of flipping up and resting on the underside of a leaf with the wings spread out flat, a habit shared by some Riodinidae.

By contrast June 1969 was extremely dry. Inland localities were practically barren of Lepidoptera, and collecting was largely limited to areas along irrigation canals or beaches along the Gulf of Mexico. Blooming patches of *Avicennia germinans* (L.) (Blackmangrove) along the beaches east of Brownsville, Texas, were congregating areas for many butterflies. We collected a fairly large series of *Libytheana carinenta mexicana* Michener,

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Figs. 1-2. Dorsal view, *Libytheana bachmanii larvata* (Strecker).

Fig. 3. Dorsal view, *Libytheana carinenta mexicana* Michener.

Fig. 4. Dorsal view, *Libytheana motya* (Hubner).

All specimens from beach area east of Brownsville, Texas, 27 June 1969.

1943 here which were easily separated from the abundant *Libytheana bachmanii larvata* (Strecker, [1878]) by their darker appearance and distinctive flight pattern. Flying here with *larvata* and *mexicana* we collected probably the only U.S. specimens of *Libytheana motya* (Hubner), [1823]. Two females were taken 27 June by the junior author and at least two additional specimens were subsequently seen but not captured. The specific status of *Libytheana motya* is uncertain. Bates (1935) treated it as the Cuban subspecies of *L. carinenta* (Cramer), [1777]. It is pictured on Pl. 64 of Boisduval & Le Conte's "Lepidopteres . . . de L'Amerique Septentrionale", perhaps from specimens caught or reared by John Abbot in Georgia. It was relegated to the synonymy of *L. bachmanii* by McDunnough (1938) and dropped from the list of Nearctic Rhopalocera by dos Passos (1964) for lack of any known United States records. For the present the question of whether these specimens represent a distinct species or were merely genetic recessives in the mainland populations of *L. carinenta* is unresolved. On the strength of these captures we feel that *Libytheana motya* should be reinstated as a member of the Nearctic Rhopalocera.

We wish to thank Mr. H. A. Freeman of Garland, Texas, for determining *Polythrix mexicanus*; Mr. Oakley Shields, University of California, and Dr. Cyril F. dos Passos, Mendham, N.J., for confirming the *Libytheana motya* determination; and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department for furnishing us with the necessary state park collecting permits.

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